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Title: Need to allot more food-grains from Central Pool to Kerala for Onam Fetival Season.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (IDUKKI): Sir, Onam is an important festival of Kerala State celebrated by all sections of the people irrespective of caste and creed. This year we are celebrating Onam in the last week of August. In fact, considering the wishes of the people of Kerala, 27th August, the main day of celebration, has been declared as a parliamentary holiday.

Every year the Government of India allots additional quantity of food grains over and above the PDS allotment on this occasion. This year the State is facing severe crises, like viral fever and natural calamities, and the State Government had to give free ration to a lot of people affected by these calamities. So, additional allotment of food grains in sufficient quantity is necessary to meet the requirement during the Onam festival season.

The Government of India allotted only 22,000 metric tonnes of rice and 8,000 metric tonnes of sugar as announced by the Minister of State for Agriculture. In fact, the Government of Kerala had demanded an allotment of 71,000 metric tonnes of rice to provide additional 10 kilograms of rice to all the 71 lakh ration card holders.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: What is your demand?

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE : I demand that the Central Government should allot 71,000 metric tonnes of rice to provide additional 10 kilograms of rice to all the 71 lakh ration card holders; 35,500 metric tonnes of wheat to provide additional 5 kilograms of wheat per ration card holder, in view of the additional requirement during the festival season.

There has been a commitment from the time of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that Kerala will be provided with sufficient food grains from the central pool considering the fact that Kerala cultivates cash crops and spices which earn foreign exchange for the country.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Instead of putting your demand, you are giving a lecture.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE : My demand is that sufficient rice, wheat and sugar has to be allotted to Kerala State during this festival season. Thank you.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN : Sir, I associate myself with what the hon. Member has stated.

SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA : Sir, I also associated with what the hon. Member has said.